

REMARKS

Claims 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17 and 22-30 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 17 are amended, claims 22-29 are added, and claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 18-21 are cancelled, without prejudice to, or disclaimer, of the subject matter recited therein. Applicants have amended claims 11, 13 and 15 to include the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have also added new claims 22-30, which correspond to the subject matter recited in claims 3, 5, 7, 9 and 17. No new matter is added.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 11, 13, and 15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants respectfully assert that claims 11, 13 and 15 are allowed because they each have been amended into independent form.

The Office Action rejects claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. This rejection of claim 2 is moot. The Office Action asserts "relatively different direction" claim 2 indefinite. Claims 11, 13 and 15, which are amended to include the subject matter of claim 2, recite "a different direction." Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 11, 13 and 15 distinctly claim the subject matter and thus are definite.

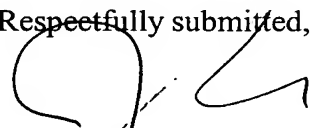
The Office Action rejects claims 2, 5, 7, 9 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,368,378 to Sasaki et al. (hereinafter Sasaki); and rejects claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,852,076 to Serafin et al. (hereinafter Serafin). The rejections of claim 2 are moot and the rejections of claims 3, 5, 7, 9 and 17 are respectfully traversed.

Claims 3, 5, 7, 9 and 17 are amended to depend from claim 11. As discussed above, claim 11 is amended into independent form and thus is allowable. Thus, claims 3, 5, 7, 9 and 17 are patentable over the applied references, for at least the reasons discussed in the Office Action for allowing claims 11, 13 and 15. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17 and 22-30 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,


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